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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BROOKS EXPLAINS THE PATRIOT ACT

PRESS RELEASE

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, today addressed over 130 public safety officials at the Indiana War Memorial regarding the strengths and applications of the USA Patriot Act which was passed by Congress in the wake of September 11th to improve law enforcement tools needed to fight the war on terrorism.

Brooks illustrated the necessity of the Patriot Act, "Earlier this spring, the Attorney General announced the arrest of Iyman Faris, a naturalized citizen living in Columbus, Ohio, a city so much like Indianapolis in scale and feel that the arrest reminds us it could happen here. On a trip to Afghanistan, Faris allegedly met with bin Laden himself, and later took instruction

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from Khalid Sheik Mohammed, bin Laden's mastermind of the September 11th attacks who himself was arrested in Pakistan in March. Faris was plotting to blow up the Brooklyn Bridge when federal agents took him down. He was a truck driver with a license to transport hazardous materials. He pleaded guilty in May to federal terrorism charges and faces up to 20 years in prison. Just think about that: an al Qaeda operative in Columbus, Ohio."

"All told, to date the Justice Department has brought 255 criminal charges since September 11, 2001. One hundred thirty two (132) individuals have been convicted or pled guilty. Alleged terrorist cells have been neutralized in Buffalo, Detroit, Seattle and Portland. Much of this good news owes to the wisdom of Congress in passing the USA Patriot Act in the aftermath of 9-11," Brooks told the gathering of federal, state, local and private industry officials.

In her speech, Brooks outlined the judicial oversight involved when using the more sensitive provisions of the Act during the investigatory process, particularly the need to establish probable cause and receive a court order. She stated, "Judicial oversight is paramount."

Later, Brooks mentioned the Patriot Act's adaptation of law enforcement techniques to adjust to new challenges and new technologies such as the Internet, e-mail and voice mail. She

added, “but perhaps the most important achievement of the Patriot Act was the tearing down of walls that previously cut off communication between intelligence and law enforcement officials.”

Brooks declared, “As Americans, we should absolutely feel safer knowing that the Patriot Act is working to root out terrorism.”

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